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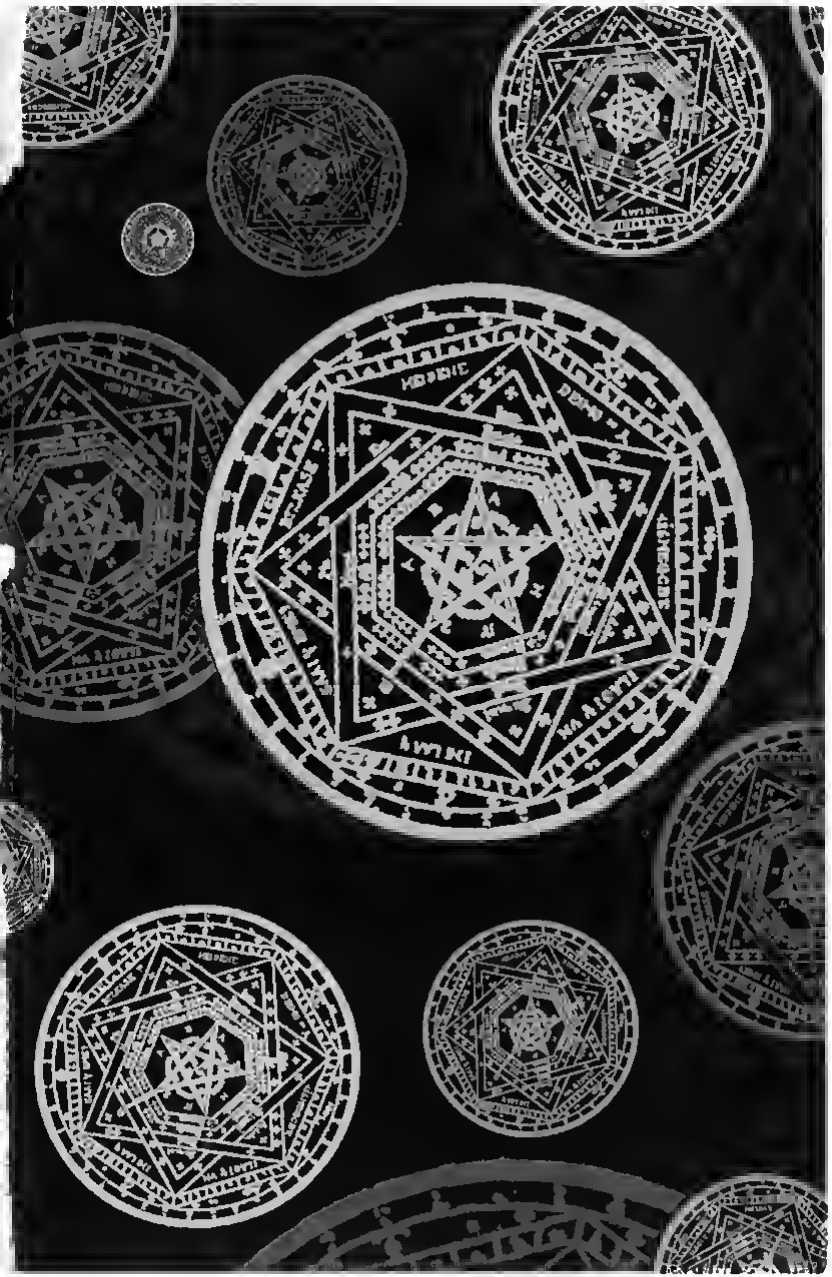
TOKYOPOP
REBIRTH
Story and Art by Woo
18



REBIRTH™

VOLUME 18

STORY and ART BY
WOO

TOKYOPOP®
HAMBURG // LONDON // LOS ANGELES // TOKYO

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created by Woo

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STORY THUS FAR

Mysteriously transported from the Ring of the Vampire Lord Tournament, Deshwitat finds himself reliving the worst night of his life—the moment when Kalutika murdered his beloved Lilith. But it is only an illusion, cast by Poison Ash, one that Desh soon overcomes. Meanwhile, at Vatican City, Remi and Eiji learn from a perverted priest that the members of the Order of St. Michael are being held in the deadly Tower of Trials, a place few ever return from. And as the next round of the tournament is about to begin, a massive explosion eliminates nearly all of the combatants, leaving only Deshwitat, Grey and Millenear to compete...

REBIRTH

Vol 18

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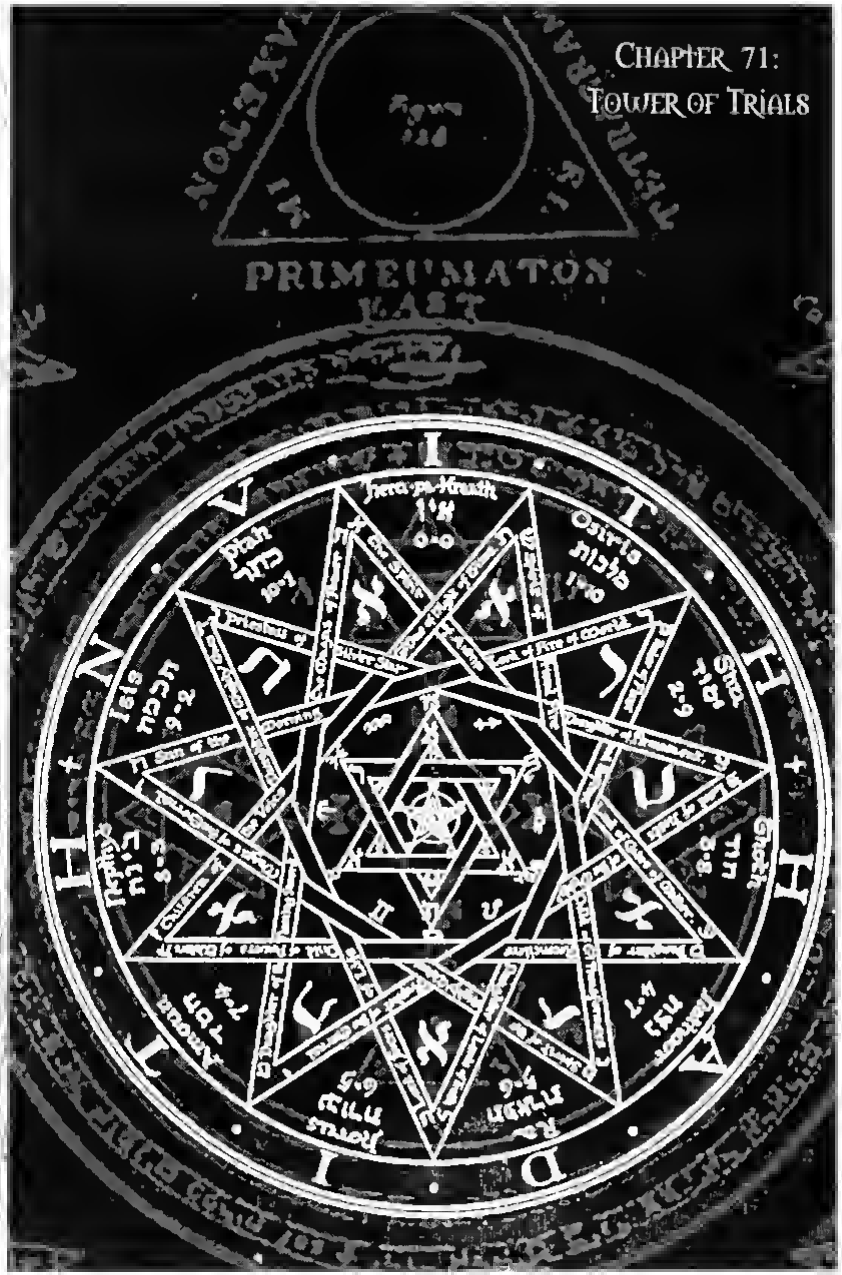
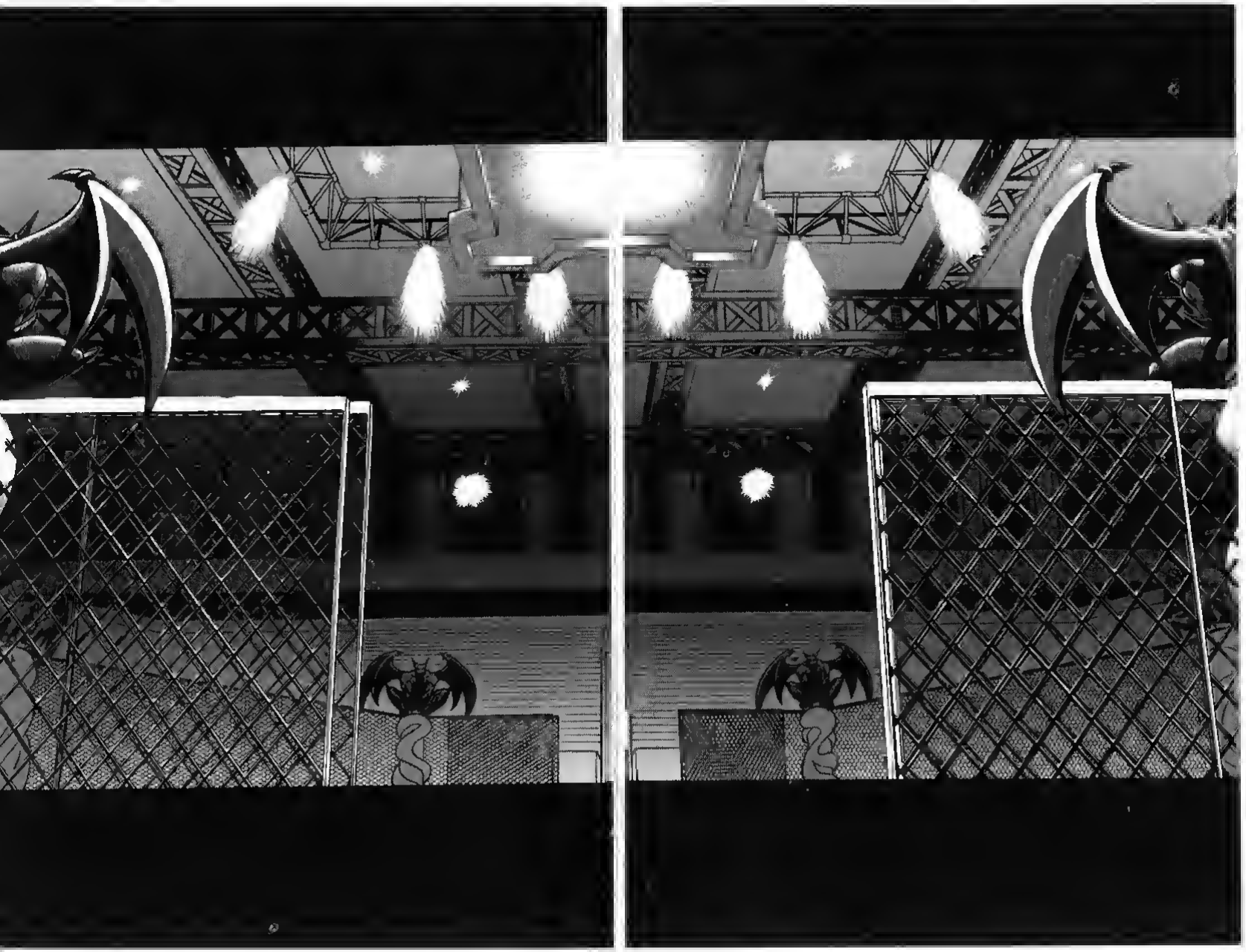
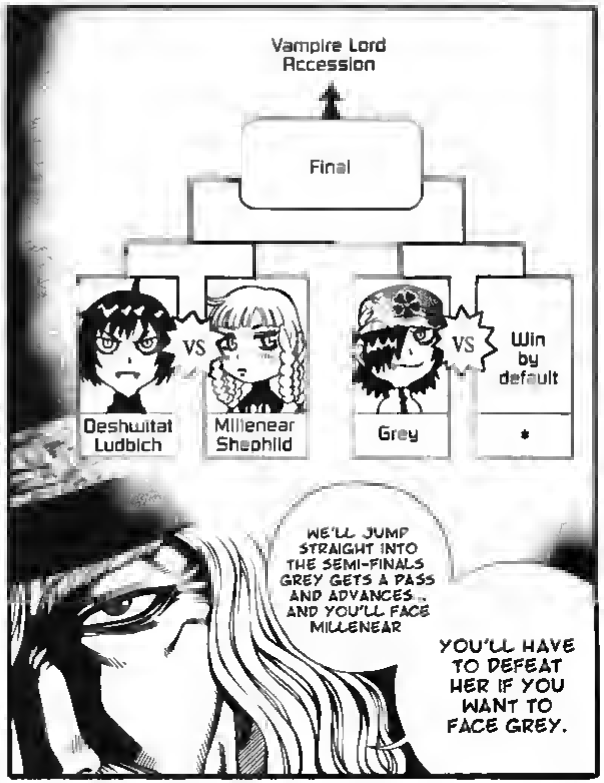




THIS ENTIRE TOURNAMENT WAS A GODDAMN TRAP FROM THE BEGINNING!
THE ONLY PLAYERS LEFT ARE GREY MILLENEAR... AND YOU. WHAT ARE THE ODDS OF THAT?
ONLY THING I CAN'T FIGURE OUT IS WHO'S COMING AT YOU NEXT...GREY OR MILLENEAR. ESPECIALLY THE WAY GREY WIPED OUT THE OTHER COMPETITORS
THE SMART BET IS ON MILLENEAR ...
...ALTHOUGH THE REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE BOARD DIDN'T HAVE ANY ANSWERS...HE JUST TOLD ME TO BE READY.
SEEMS LIKE GREY'S KNOCKED THE BOARD ON THEIR HEELS AS WELL.
WHAT ARE THE ODDS THEY'LL JUST CANCEL THE TOURNAMENT?
NOT A SNOW-MAN'S CHANCE IN HELL, BOY.
HEH.
DRAISTAIL.
YOU HAVE SOMETHING USEFUL TO SHARE, OLD MAN?
THAT ANY WAY TA GREET YER COACH, BOY?

THE PLAYERS TAKIN' THE DIRT NAP WILL GET TAKEN OFF THE ROSTER, AND THE TOURNAMENT WILL GO ON AS PLANNED.


Vampire Lord Accession
Final
Deshwitat Ludbich
VS
Millenear Shephild
VS
Grey
Win by default
*
WE'LL JUMP STRAIGHT INTO THE SEMI-FINALS GREY GETS A PASS AND ADVANCES... AND YOU'LL FACE MILLENEAR
YOU'LL HAVE TO DEFEAT HER IF YOU WANT TO FACE GREY.

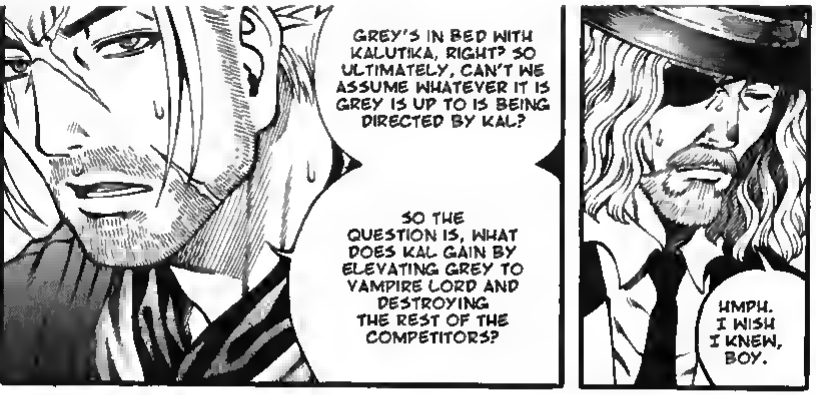
HOW CAN THE BOARD RECOGNIZE GREY AS A COMPETITOR?
DIDN'T HE BREAK THE RULES WHEN HE KILLED THE OTHER 16 COMPETITORS? HE SHOULD BE DISQUALIFIED, AT THE VERY LEAST!
.....

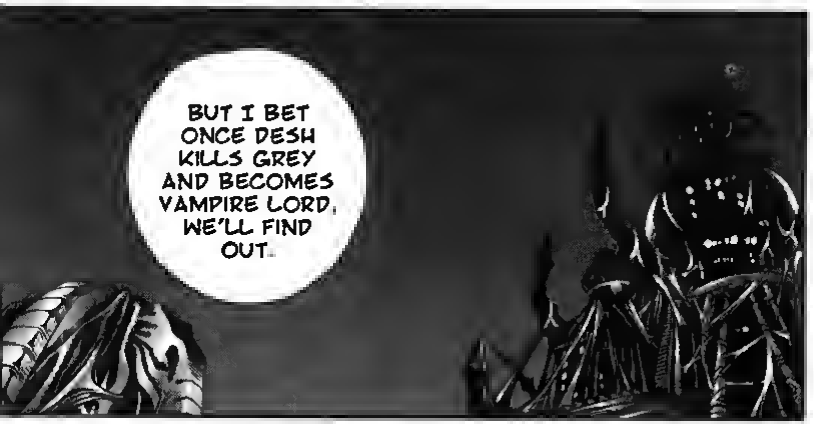
DO YOU HONESTLY THINK THE BOARD CAN DO ANYTHING TO GREY HE DOESN'T WANT DONE?

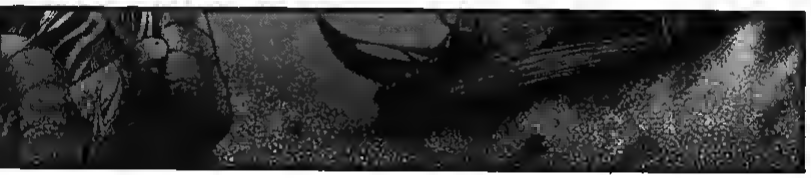
HELL, HE COULD WIPE OUT EVERY MEMBER O' THE BOARD WITHOUT BREAKIN' A SWEAT. THE ONLY THING THAT KEEPS HIM IN CHECK...

...IS THAT FER SOME REASON, HE SEEMS DEAD SET ON WINNIN' THE TITLE OF VAMPIRE LORD.
NO, THE BOARD'S GOT NO POWER OVER GREY... HE'S AS SURE AS RUNNIN' THIS COMPETITION.
AND UNFORTU-NATELY, THERE ISN'T ANYONE AMONG US WHO HAS THE POWER TO STOP HIM.

BEST BET'S TO LET HIM KEEP UP HIS CHARADE AND FINISH THE TOURNAMENT. IT'LL BUY US TIME. IF NOTHING ELSE...
...TIME WE NEED TO FIGGER OUT HOW WE'RE GOING TO OUTSMART HIM.
OR MORE SPECIFICALLY, HOW *YOU'RE* GOING TO STOP HIM!
SIGH.
NOT *TOO* MUCH PRESSURE, EH, OLD MAN?
DON'T WORRY 'BOUT DISAPPOINTIN' US, BOY. NOT LIKE WE HAVE ANY FAITH IN YA ANYWAY.
HEY DRAISTAIL... ANSWER SOMETHING FOR ME.
I LIVE TO SERVE, BOY.


GREY'S IN BED WITH KALUTIKA, RIGHT? SO ULTIMATELY, CAN'T WE ASSUME WHATEVER IT IS GREY IS UP TO IS BEING DIRECTED BY KAL?
SO THE QUESTION IS, WHAT DOES KAL GAIN BY ELEVATING GREY TO VAMPIRE LORD AND DESTROYING THE REST OF THE COMPETITORS?
HMPH. I WISH I KNEW, BOY.


BUT I BET ONCE DESH KILLS GREY AND BECOMES VAMPIRE LORD, WE'LL FIND OUT.



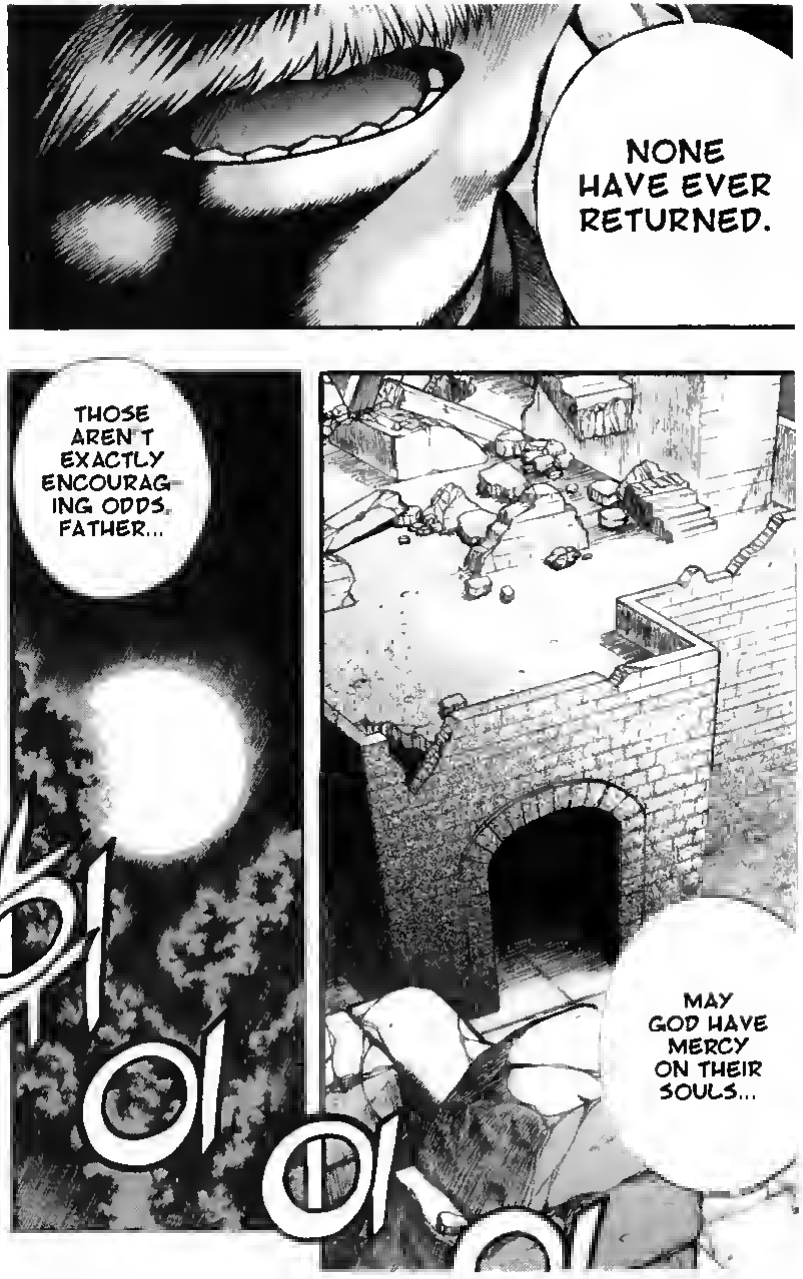
YAWNN!
...EH?
GAACHK!
H-HEY! WAIT....!
STOP! STOP WHERE YOU ARE!
HM!

URRGHK!
YAH!
JUDGING BY THE GUARDS, I'D SAY WE FOUND THE RIGHT PLACE, HUH?
YEAH, FATHER WILLIAMS' MAP WAS CORRECT.

SO... SHALL WE HEAD IN?
LET'S!

HAVE NO FEAR, SAINT MICHAEL...
...YOUR RESCUERS ARE HERE!

THE "TOWER OF TRIALS" IS ONE OF SIX TRAINING PLACES FOR THE VATICAN'S EXORCISTS..
1643
ALTHOUGH REFERRED TO AS A TOWER, IT'S ACTUALLY A DUNGEON. OVER THE YEARS IT HAS BEEN THE PRISON OF ALL MANNER OF UNHOLY ABOMINATIONS. SO YOU SEE, THERE IS NO BETTER PLACE FOR EXORCISTS TO HONE THEIR SKILLS.
THE EXACT LAYOUT OF THE DUNGEON WAS LOST CENTURIES AGO. BUT THERE IS SAID TO BE FIVE LEVELS. THE LESSER CREATURES SEEM TO STAY IN THE UPPER LEVELS, WHILE THE MORE POWERFUL DEMONS SEEK THE LOWER
ACCORDING TO MY RE-SEARCH, THE PLACE WHERE SAINT MICHAEL IS INCARCERATED IS SOMEWHERE ON LEVEL FOUR, ABOUT 150 METERS BELOW THE SURFACE.
WHAT? THE FOURTH LEVEL?
MANY ARE THOSE WHO HAVE TRIED TO BREACH THE FIFTH LEVEL...
I HEARD THAT SAINT MICHAEL IS THE BEST WARRIOR IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH... WHY WOULD HE NOT REACH THE FIFTH LEVEL?
...AND...?

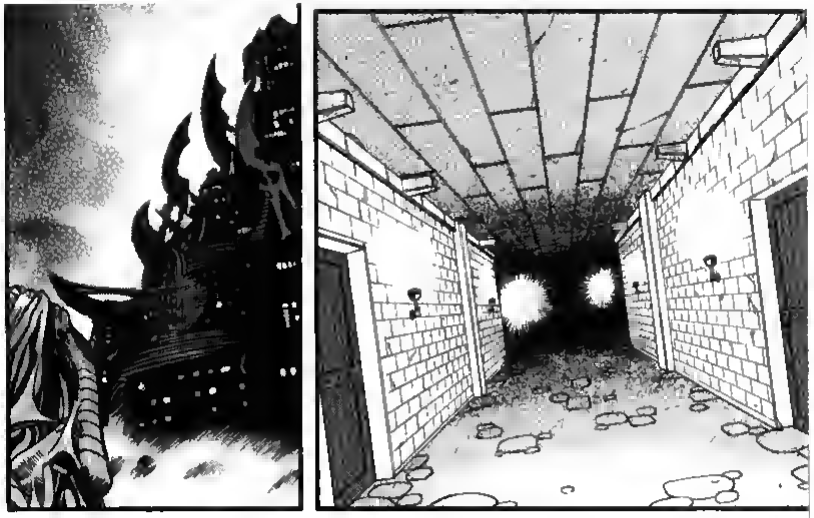

NONE HAVE EVER RETURNED.
THOSE AREN'T EXACTLY ENCOURAG-ING ODDS, FATHER...
위이이
MAY GOD HAVE MERCY ON THEIR SOULS...

NICE OF FATHER WILLIAMS TO TELL US THOSE STORIES... NOW I'M ALL CREEPED OUT!
YOU'RE SCARED, EIJI? I WOULDN'T HAVE THOUGHT YOU CAPABLE OF FEELINGS LIKE THAT. I THOUGHT ALL YOU FELT WAS LUST AND.. WELL, THAT'S IT. JUST LUST.
HEY, THERE'S NO REASON TO WORRY. IT'S NOT LIKE WE'RE GOING DOWN TO LEVEL FIVE OR ANYTHING.
HECK, I'M MORE WORRIED ABOUT GOING INTO DARK AREA WITH A PERVERT.
I...I WONDER HOW DESH IS DOING.
WHAT DO YOU CARE? I THOUGHT YOU HATED HIM.
I DO. STUPID. I'M WORRYING ABOUT MILLENEAR.
IS THAT REALLY ALL YOU SEE ME AS?
YUP. PERVERTED MONKEY.
AND...WELL, I DON'T HATE HIM THAT MUCH.
I MEAN, HE'S A JERK SOMETIMES. BUT I GET THE FEELING HE DOESN'T ALWAYS MEAN TO BE THAT WAY. IT'S LIKE HE DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO BE ANY DIFFERENT.
UH...HOW FAR DO WE HAVE TO GO DOWN?
I DON'T KNOW. MAN, IT'S DARK DOWN THERE. I CAN'T EVEN SEE THE END...
I HAVE A BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS. WE NEED TO BE CAREFUL.
WHAT ...?
OH!
AAAHHHHH!!
THE FLOOR!

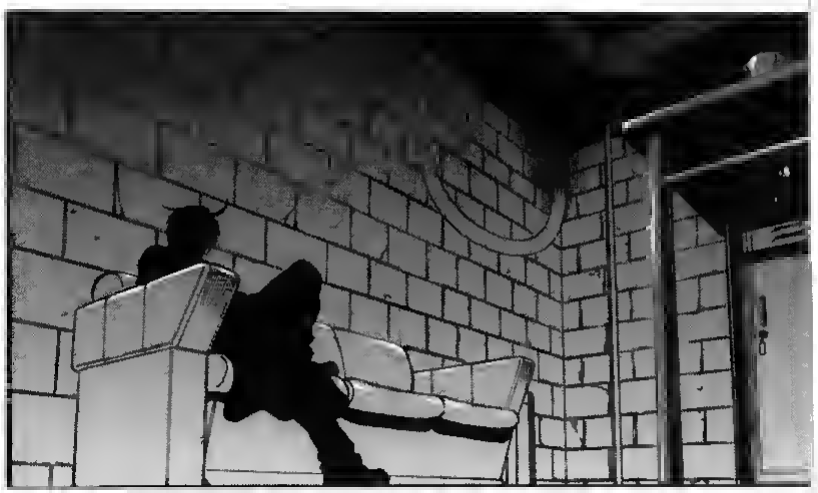
THE FLOOR COLLAPSED!
AACKH!
GUH!
OOOWW... WHERE... YOU OKAY, REMI?
UNGH... I'M ALL RIGHT...BUT I CAN'T SEE...
HEY!!
OH, YA THINK?!
WATCH THE HANDS!
IT WAS AN ACCIDENT-- OW!! WHY'D YOU HIT ME?
SHUT UP! WE NEED TO STAY ALERT, YOU PERV!
OUCH
WE NEED TO BE ABLE TO SEE, FIRST.
JUST DON'T HIT ME AGAIN!
WHERE DID I PUT THAT AMULET?
WHERE ARE YOU, EIJI?
RIGHT HERE... HEY, THERE'S SOMETHING LEATHERY RIGHT HERE ...
LEATHERY?
AH! I FOUND IT!
ILLUMI-NATE!
光

KYAAAA-
AAAAH-
HHH!!!
GRAA
AHRR
DID I KILL IT? I KILLED IT, RIGHT? WHAT THE HECK WAS THAT THING? IS IT DEAD? I KILLED IT, RIGHT?
HUFF HUFF
HURG
HURG

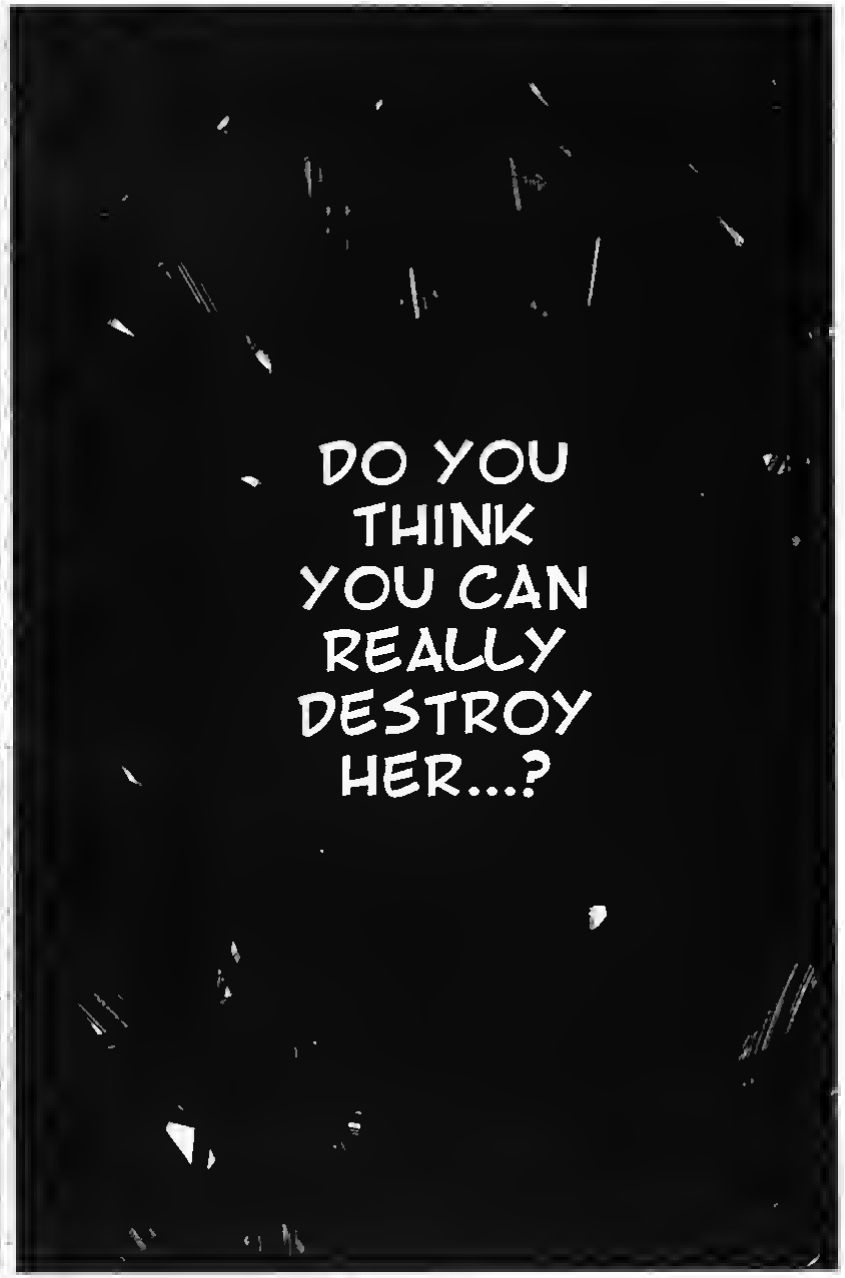
SON
OF A...



WAITING ROOM
—D · L · Rudbich—

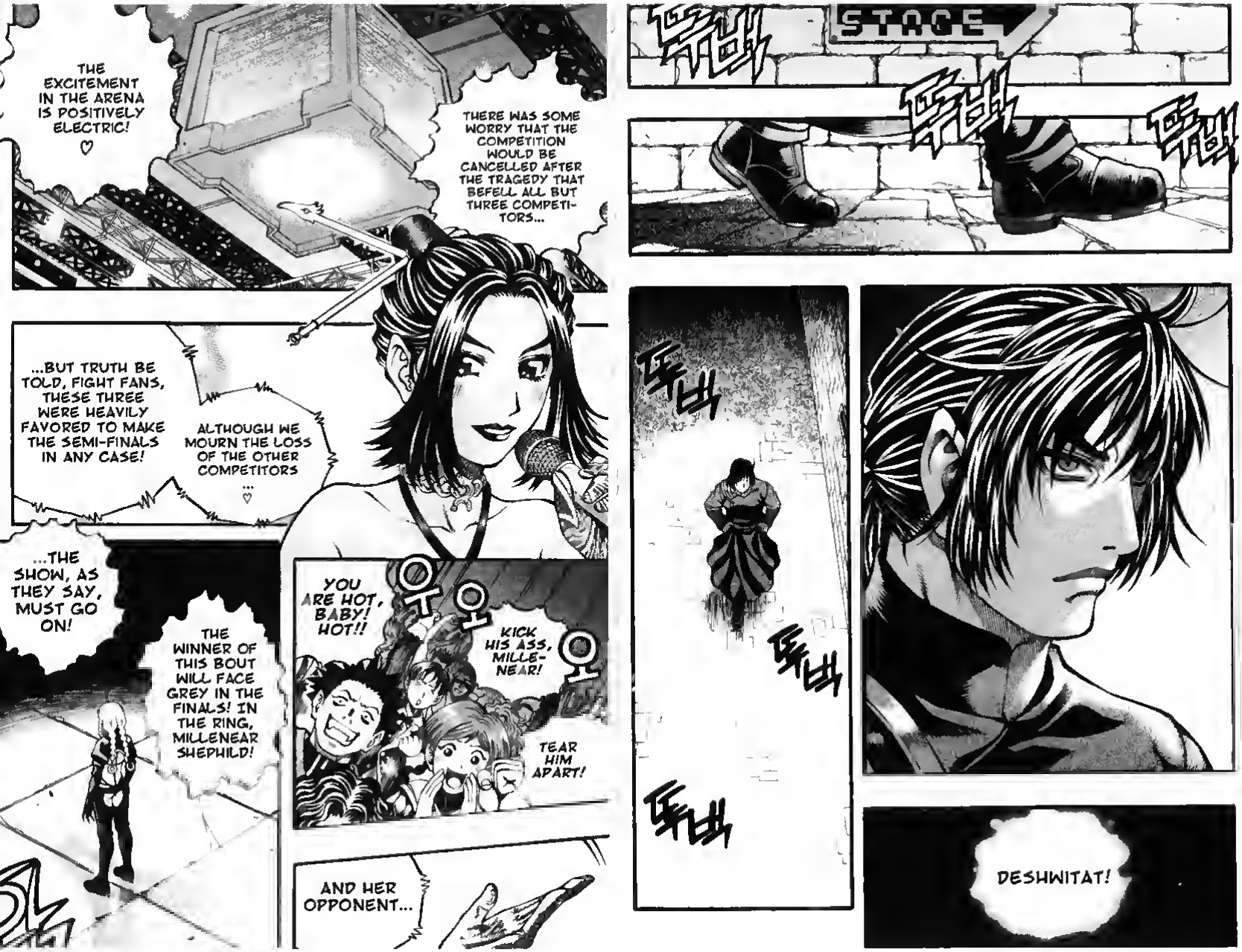


PROMISE ME, DESHWI-TAT!
THAT YOU WILL DO YOUR BEST TO RESCUE MILLENEAR WHILE I'M NOT HERE.
WAS IT MILLENEAR? I'M SORRY FOR HER BUT...
THIS IS A MATTER THAT HAS THE FATE OF THE VAMPIRE RACE ON THE LINE. YOU WILL HAVE TO USE EVERYTHING IN YOUR POWER TO DEFEAT HER.
THAT'S RIGHT, DESHWITAT. BUT YOUR OPPONENT IS MILLENEAR.
NO MATTER WITH HOW MUCH DETER-MINATION YOU ATTACK HER WITH...


DO YOU THINK YOU CAN REALLY DESTROY HER...?

DESHWITAT L. RUDBICH, REPORT TO COMPETITOR WAITING ROOM. DESHWITAT L. RUDBICH.
THE SEMI-FINALS WILL BEGIN IN TEN MINUTES.
TTTT
TTTT
TTTT
TTTT

Chapter 72:
Love and Hate


THE EXCITEMENT IN THE ARENA IS POSITIVELY ELECTRIC! ♡
THERE WAS SOME WORRY THAT THE COMPETITION WOULD BE CANCELLED AFTER THE TRAGEDY THAT BEFELL ALL BUT THREE COMPETITORS...
...BUT TRUTH BE TOLD, FIGHT FANS, THESE THREE WERE HEAVILY FAVORED TO MAKE THE SEMI-FINALS IN ANY CASE!
ALTHOUGH WE MOURN THE LOSS OF THE OTHER COMPETITORS ... ♡
...THE SHOW, AS THEY SAY, MUST GO ON!
THE WINNER OF THIS BOUT WILL FACE GREY IN THE FINALS! IN THE RING, MILLENEAR SHEPHILD!
YOU ARE HOT, BABY! HOT!!
KICK HIS ASS, MILLENEAR!
TEAR HIM APART!
AND HER OPPONENT...
STAGE
DESHWITAT!

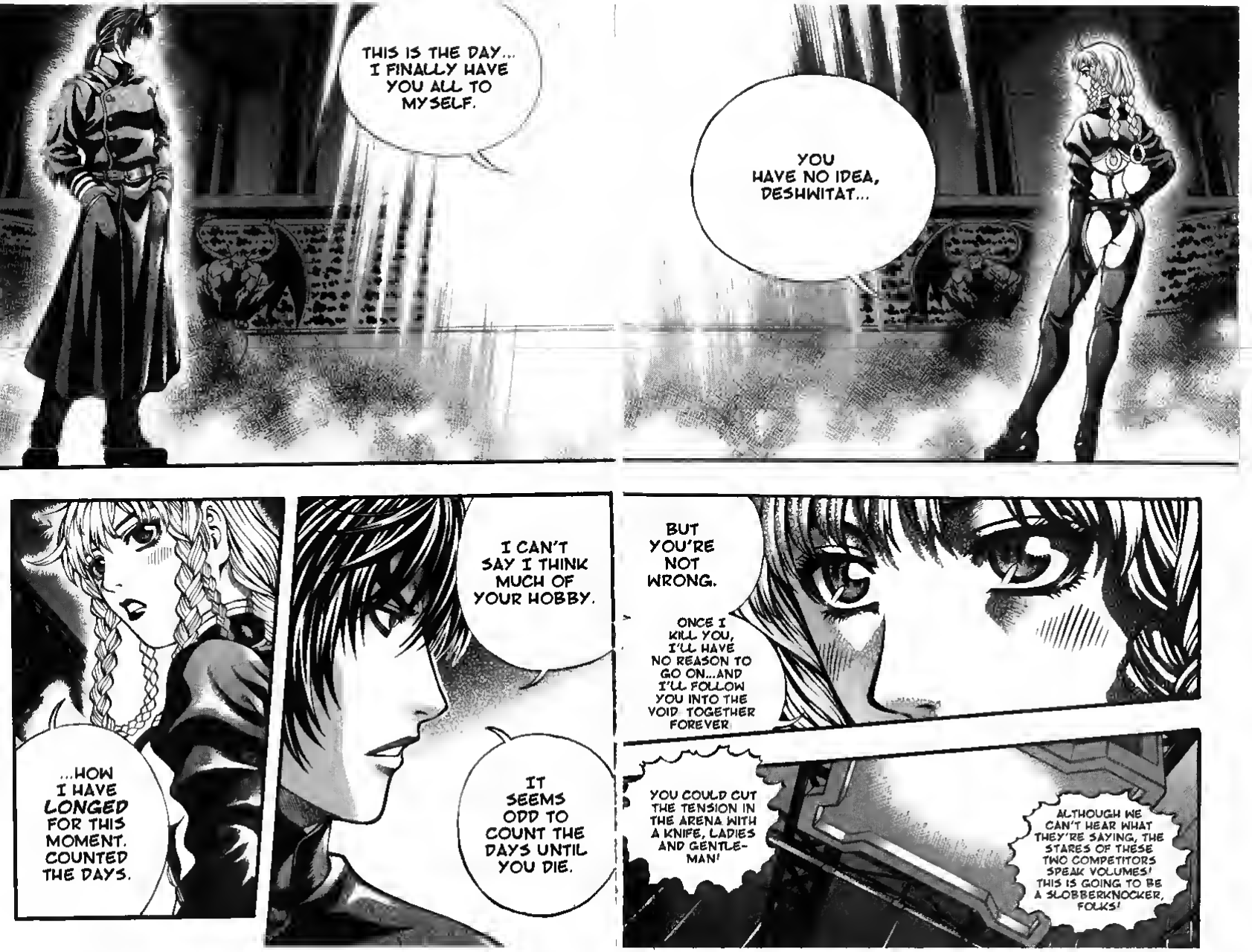
YOU'RE UP, MR. DESHWI-TAT.
YOU READY?

타닷

THE COM-PETITOR IS ENTERING ...
...NOW!
카캉

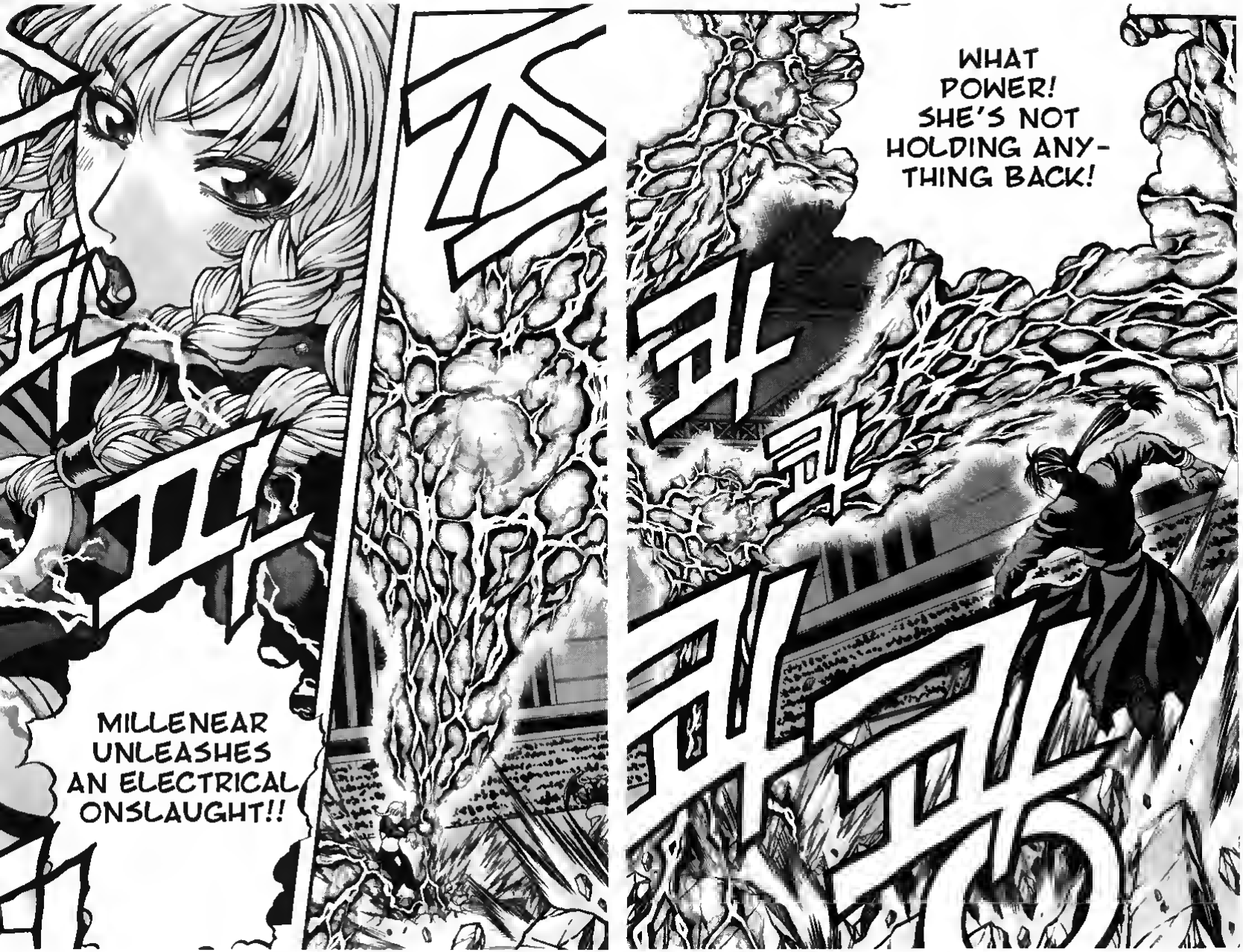
드드드

ONCE THEY WERE ALLIES, BUT NOW BITTER ENEMIES! HER OPPONENT... DESHWITAT L. RUDBICH!!
TWO COMPETITORS HAVE ENTERED...BUT ONLY ONE WILL LEAVE! ONLY ONE CAN FACE GREY IN THE FINALS... WHICH ONE WILL IT BE?
와와와


THIS IS THE DAY... I FINALLY HAVE YOU ALL TO MYSELF.
YOU HAVE NO IDEA, DESHWITAT...
...HOW I HAVE LONGED FOR THIS MOMENT. COUNTED THE DAYS.
I CAN'T SAY I THINK MUCH OF YOUR HOBBY.
IT SEEMS ODD TO COUNT THE DAYS UNTIL YOU DIE.
BUT YOU'RE NOT WRONG.
ONCE I KILL YOU, I'LL HAVE NO REASON TO GO ON...AND I'LL FOLLOW YOU INTO THE VOID TOGETHER FOREVER
YOU COULD CUT THE TENSION IN THE ARENA WITH A KNIFE, LADIES AND GENTLE-MAN!
ALTHOUGH WE CAN'T HEAR WHAT THEY'RE SAYING, THE STARES OF THESE TWO COMPETITORS SPEAK VOLUMES! THIS IS GOING TO BE A SLOBBERKNOCKER, FOLKS!

I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN WATCH THIS...
I CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT DESH MUST BE FEELING RIGHT NOW, KNOWING HE MIGHT HAVE TO KILL HIS FRIEND...
BETTER HOPE HE DOESN'T FEEL ANYTHING. DESH GETS ALL SENTIMENTAL, SHE'LL EXPLOIT THAT WEAKNESS AND TEAR HIS HEART OUT. NO MERCY
THIS SEAT LOOKS EMPTY. MAY I?
GREY...?!

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE NERVOUS. I DON'T BITE.
WAIT...COME TO THINK OF IT, I DO
YOU'RE NOT STILL HOLDING A GRUDGE BECAUSE I HANDED YOU YOUR ASS AWHILE BACK? IT'S WATER UNDER THE BRIDGE AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED...
ROT IN HELL, YOU SON OF A BITCH!
AFTER WHAT YOU DID TO MILLENEAR, YOU GIVE ME ONE GOOD REASON I SHOULDN'T CUT YOUR HEART OUT, YOU BASTARD!
GRUDGES AREN'T HEALTHY, RETT...
THE AUDIENCE IS GETTING RESTLESS! THE EXCITEMENT HAS REACHED A FEVER PITCH!
WE'RE READY TO BEGIN THE COUNTDOWN TO START THE MATCH ...
THREE!
TWO!
ONE--!!
THERE'S THE BELL!
3
2
1
띵-
띵-
띵-
HHOI-


MILLENEAR UNLEASHES AN ELECTRICAL ONSLAUGHT!!
WHAT POWER! SHE'S NOT HOLDING ANY-THING BACK!

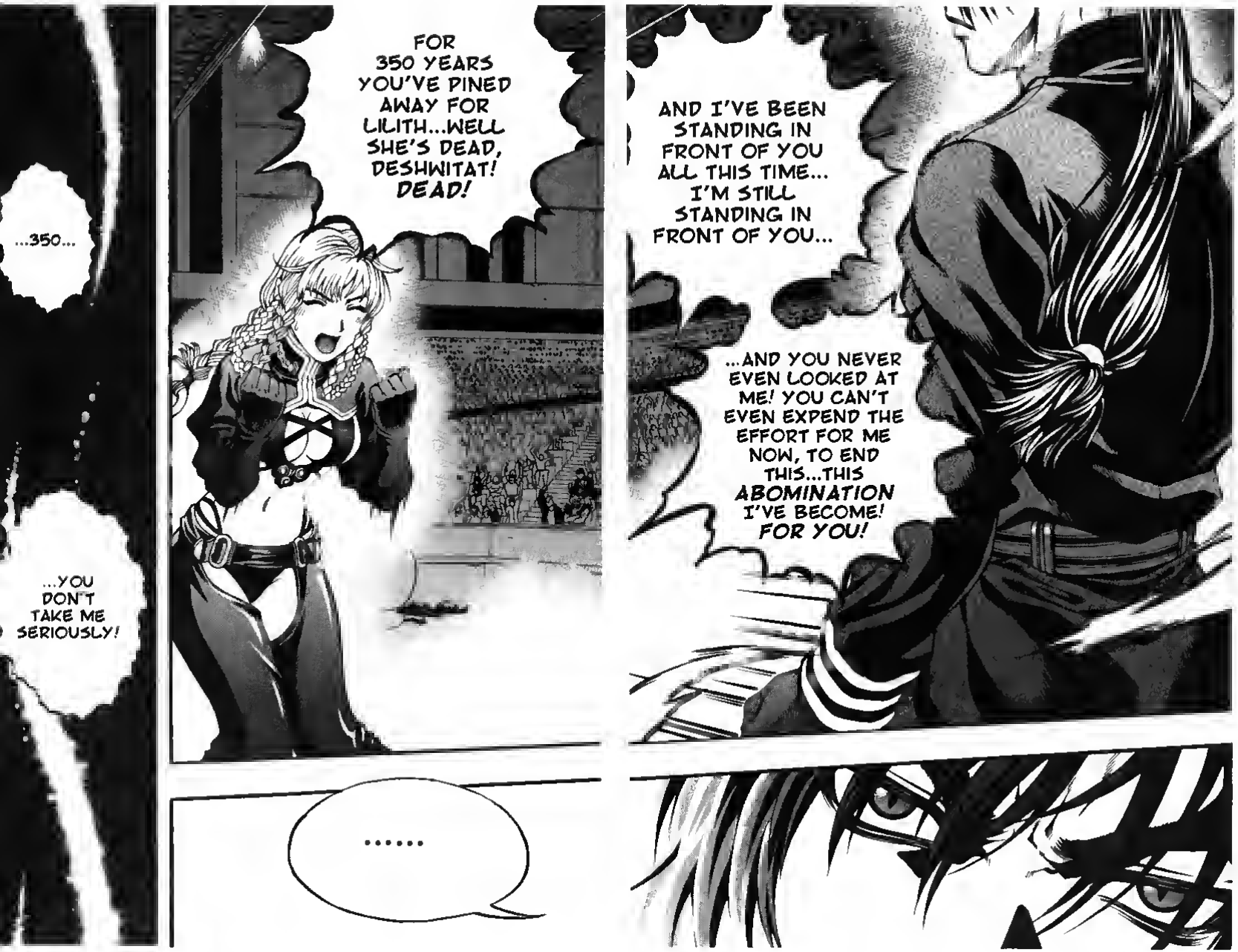
CAN DESHWITAT SURVIVE SUCH A FIERCE OPENING ASSAULT?
.....

AOL

WHAT A BATTLE! THIS ONE'S GOING DOWN IN THE HISTORY BOOKS, FOLKS!
WE ARE WITNESSING A TRUE CLASH OF THE TITANS!
HMPH!
YOU ...

...ARE NOT EVEN TRYING, DESHWITAT!
FIGHT ME! I WILL NOT LET YOU MAKE A FOOL OF ME HERE, AT THE END OF DAYS!

IS THAT WHAT YOU THINK, MILLE-NEAR?
MAKE YOU A FOOL? YOU'VE LET GREY DO THAT ALREADY.
I'VE NEVER PRETENDED TO UNDER-STAND YOUR FEELINGS ...
SO COME, PUPPET...AND FINISH THE TASK YOUR MASTER GAVE YOU.
HOW DARE YOU? HOW DARE YOU?!
YOU'VE NEVER TREATED ME WITH RESPECT... EVEN HERE, NOW, AT THE END ...

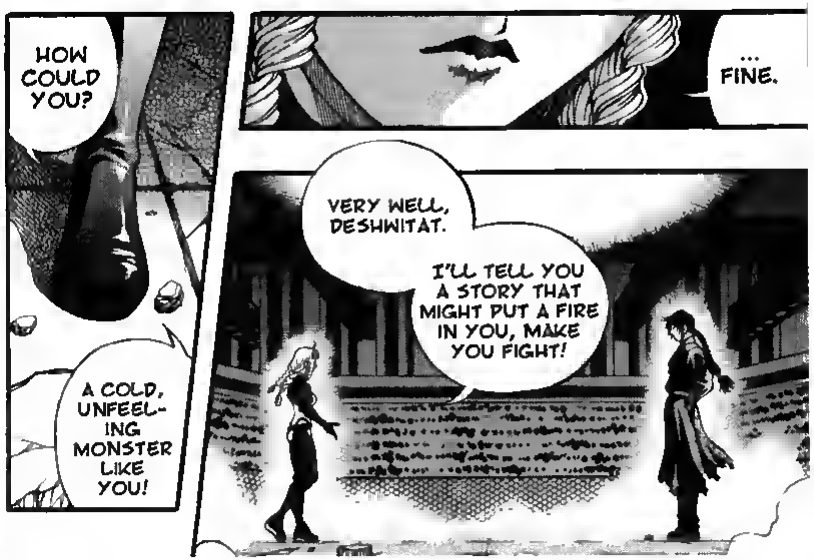

...350...
...YOU DON'T TAKE ME SERIOUSLY!
FOR 350 YEARS YOU'VE PINED AWAY FOR LILITH...WELL SHE'S DEAD, DESHWITAT! DEAD!
.....
AND I'VE BEEN STANDING IN FRONT OF YOU ALL THIS TIME... I'M STILL STANDING IN FRONT OF YOU...
...AND YOU NEVER EVEN LOOKED AT ME! YOU CAN'T EVEN EXPEND THE EFFORT FOR ME NOW, TO END THIS...THIS ABOMINATION I'VE BECOME! FOR YOU!

I LOVE YOU DESHWITAT... AND IF YOU WON'T GIVE ME YOUR HEART IN THIS LIFE...
...THEN I'LL TEAR IT OUT, AND IT WILL BE MINE IN THE NEXT! THEN WE'LL HAVE ALL OF ETERNITY FOR ME TO MAKE YOU LOVE ME!!
THAT'S CRAZY, MILLE-NEAR.
WHAT KIND OF LOVE BREAKS THE NECK OF ITS INTENDED?
I DID THIS FOR YOU! SO WE--
YOU'RE WRONG, MILLE-NEAR.

WRONG...?!
YOU SAY YOU LOVE ME ...
...BUT LOVE DOESN'T BEHAVE LIKE THIS. YOU'VE TURNED IT INTO SOMETHING POSSESSIVE. HATEFUL.
DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN YOU FIRST STARTED TO FEEL SOMETHING FOR ME? IT WAS WHEN WE WERE AT THE VATICAN.
YOU READ DANIEL'S JOURNAL...AND SUDDENLY, I WASN'T JUST A MONSTER ANY-MORE. YOU... FELT FOR ME.
YOU COULDN'T HATE ME ANYMORE... YOU TRIED TO UNDER-STAND ME, TREAT ME WELL...

YOU'RE YOUNG, MILLENEAR.. INEXPERIENCED WITH YOUR OWN FEELINGS.
IS IT REALLY LOVE YOU FELT? OR JUST COMPASSION?
YOU NEVER LOVED ME, MILLENEAR. YOU PITIED ME.
EMPATHY ...
COMPASSION ...
YOU CAN CALL IT WHATEVER YOU WANT.
BUT LOVE?
NO. NEVER LOVE.

YOU'RE RIGHT...
...ABOUT ONE THING.
YOU'VE NEVER UNDERSTOOD MY FEELINGS.


HOW COULD YOU?
A COLD, UNFEELING MONSTER LIKE YOU!
... FINE.
VERY WELL, DESHWITAT.
I'LL TELL YOU A STORY THAT MIGHT PUT A FIRE IN YOU, MAKE YOU FIGHT!

YOU SEE...
...LILITH IS ALIVE...
...AND IF YOU DON'T KILL ME, I SWEAR I'LL SLAKE MY THIRST ON HER BLOOD!
IF YOU WANT TO KNOW WHERE SHE IS...
...YOU'LL HAVE TO TEAR THE WORDS FROM MY BLOODIED LIPS!

WHOA! APPARENTLY THE COMPETITORS ARE DONE FEELING EACH OTHER OUT AND MILLENEAR HAS GONE BACK ON THE OFFENSIVE!
THE INTENSITY OF HER ATTACK IS SENDING SHOCK-WAVES THROUGH THE ENTIRE ARENA!

MILLENEAR SHEPHILD IS BREAK-ING THE COMBAT ENERGY RECORD!! IT'S MORE THAN 38,400!! 38,400!!
38406 PT
D.L.RUDBICH
0 PT
AS ALWAYS, DESHWITAT'S METER IS READING ZERO!
THAT'S RIGHT, MILLIE! TEAR HIM APART! NO MERCY!
SHUT UP, YOU BASTARD!

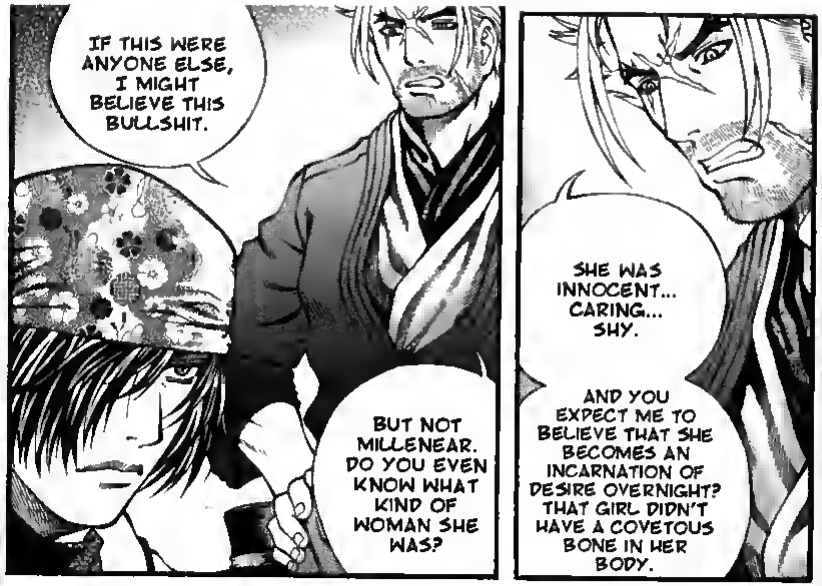
I'M GONNA KNOCK THOSE FANGS DOWN YOUR GODDAMN THROAT FOR WHAT YOU DID TO HER, YOU...
HA HA HA!
POOR, POOR RETT! YOU STILL HAVEN'T FIGURED IT OUT, HAVE YOU?
I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING BECAUSE I WAS ENJOY-ING YOUR PAIN. BUT...I DIDN'T TURN HER INTO A VAMPIRE.
I'M ALSO NOT CONTROLLING HER MIND. I WOULDN'T EVEN KNOW HOW!
WHAT...?!

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
IF YOU DIDN'T TURN HER INTO A VAMPIRE...IF YOU'RE NOT CONTROLLING HER...
THAT'S RIGHT, RETT

TH-THIS IS CRAZY! YOU'RE SAYING...WHAT? THAT MILLENEAR DID THIS OF HER OWN FREE WILL?
THAT MILLENEAR WAS SO TWISTED WITH JEALOUSY... NO! YOU'RE FULL OF SHIT, GREY!

WHETHER YOU BELIEVE ME OR NOT IS OF LITTLE CONSE-QUENCE.
OH...AND YOU CAN LET GO OF ME NOW.

YOU HUMANS... SO EASILY CORRUPTED...
...BY YOUR OWN DESIRES.
DESIRE TO POSSESS.
DESIRE FOR EXCLUSIVE POSSES-SION
LUST. EGO. VANITY. PRIDE.
ALL MILLENEAR'S DARK, HUMAN DESIRES, PUSHED DOWN AND REPRESSED WHILE SHE WAS ALIVE... AND RUNNING FREE NOW THAT SHE'S UNDEAD.


IF THIS WERE ANYONE ELSE, I MIGHT BELIEVE THIS BULLSHIT.
BUT NOT MILLENEAR. DO YOU EVEN KNOW WHAT KIND OF WOMAN SHE WAS?
SHE WAS INNOCENT... CARING... SHY.
AND YOU EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE THAT SHE BECOMES AN INCARNATION OF DESIRE OVERNIGHT? THAT GIRL DIDN'T HAVE A COVETOUS BONE IN HER BODY.

ALL HUMANS COVET. AND AS FOR BONES IN HER BODY ...
...WELL, IT SEEMS THE ONE SHE DESIRED MOST BE-LONGS TO DESHWITAT.

HAVE YOU EVER WANTED SOMETHING SO BAD THAT YOU JUST KNEW YOU COULD NEVER HAVE?
AND DIDN'T YOU EVER...JUST FOR A MOMENT... ENTERTAIN THE THOUGHT OF JUST *TAKING* IT?
MANY TIMES

POOR MILLENEAR. SO YOUNG, INNOCENT, SHY. BURNING WITH DESIRES AND NEEDS SHE HAD NEVER EXPERIENCED, AND SCARCELY UNDERSTOOD
HOW MUCH MORE DIFFICULT IT MUST HAVE BEEN TO HAVE DESHWITAT TREAT HER BUDDING EMOTIONS WITH SUCH COLD DISINTEREST.
PAIN, REJECTION, ANGER, RESENTMENT, JEALOUSY...
ALL PUSHED DOWN BY LITTLE MILLENEAR, WHO DIDN'T UNDERSTAND HOW TO DEAL WITH ANY OF IT. AND NOW IT FLOWS THROUGH HER LIKE A RAGING RIVER SINCE SHE BECAME A VAMPIRE

IT'S ALWAYS THE QUIET ONES, YOU KNOW.

THE SHY, THE UNASSUMING.. THEY'RE THE ONES THAT BECOME SERIAL KILLERS AND MAKE LAMPSHADES OUT OF PEOPLE'S SKIN.
SO DON'T TELL ME FOR ONE INSTANT THAT IT COULD NEVER HAPPEN WITH DEAR, SWEET MILLENEAR.

I GAVE HER THE POWER, THOUGH. ONCE SHE TOLD ME WHAT SHE WANTED, I GAVE HER ALL THE POWER SHE'D NEED TO MAKE IT POSSIBLE.
OF COURSE.. SHE ASKED FOR THAT, TOO.

OKAY, FINE. LET'S SAY YOU'RE TELLING THE TRUTH... YOU'RE NOT THE ONE CONTROLLING MILLENEAR.
BUT IF YOU DIDN'T TURN HER INTO A VAMPIRE... WHO DID?

MILLENEAR WILL NOT LET UP! HER CONTINUOUS ASSAULT HAS PUT DESHWITAT BACK ONTO HIS HEELS!
MILLENEAR IS SETTING HIM UP FOR SOMETHING... DESHWITAT COULD BE IN TROUBLE!
HOW LONG CAN HE REMAIN ON THE DEFENSIVE?
WILL HE CRUMBLE UNDER MILLENEAR'S CONTINUOUS BARRAGE?
HMPH!

UNHOLY
CRUCIFIX!!

...URK...!!

HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
SHE... SHE'S STRONGER THAN I EXPECTED ...
HER HATE... IT MAKES HER POWERFUL.
.....
I'M SORRY, MILLENEAR...
...BUT THAT'S NO CHOICE AT ALL.
I WAS WRONG TO TOY WITH HER. SHE'S TOO POWERFUL.
I HAVE TO FIGHT. I CAN'T HOLD BACK.
EITHER KILL MILLENEAR...
...OR I DIE.

DESHWITAT IS ON HIS FEET! IT LOOKS AS IF HE'S GOT HIS SECOND WIND, FIGHT FANS!
BUT DOES HE HAVE ENOUGH LEFT IN THE TANK TO GAIN THE UPPER HAND?
HA ...
HA HA HA ...
I KNEW YOU HAD IT IN YOU, DESH.
YOU'VE FINALLY DECIDED TO KILL ME!

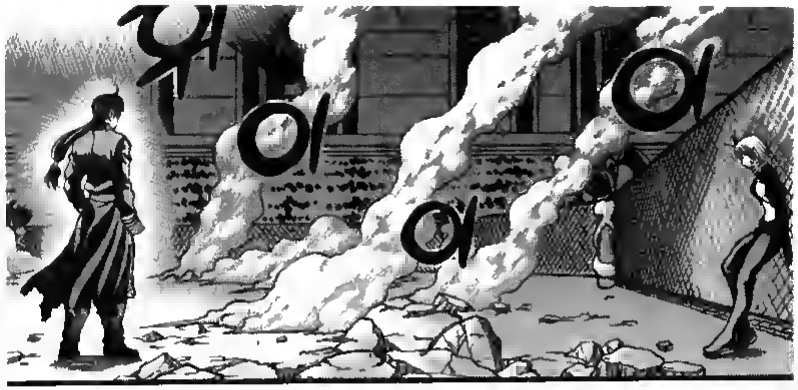
YOU'VE MADE ME A HAPPY WOMAN, DESH.
NEXT, I'LL MAKE YOU A DEAD ONE.
SO YOU'VE FINALLY DECIDED TO FIGHT ME WITH OUT HOLDING BACK ...
...BUT MAKE NO MISTAKE...

...JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT HOLDING BACK ANYMORE DOESN'T MEAN YOU'RE GOING TO WIN!

BLOODY VULCAN!!!

DESHWITAT... WHO WAS ON THE ROPES ONLY MOMENTS AGO...
...HAS COME BACK WITH A RELENTLESS BARRAGE OF HIS OWN! THIS IS THE STUFF LEGENDS ARE MADE OF!

MILLE-NEAR... I'M SORRY. SO MUCH PAIN. YOU DESERVED BETTER THAN THIS
THE BEST I CAN GIVE YOU NOW... IS A QUICK DEATH
HYAAH!

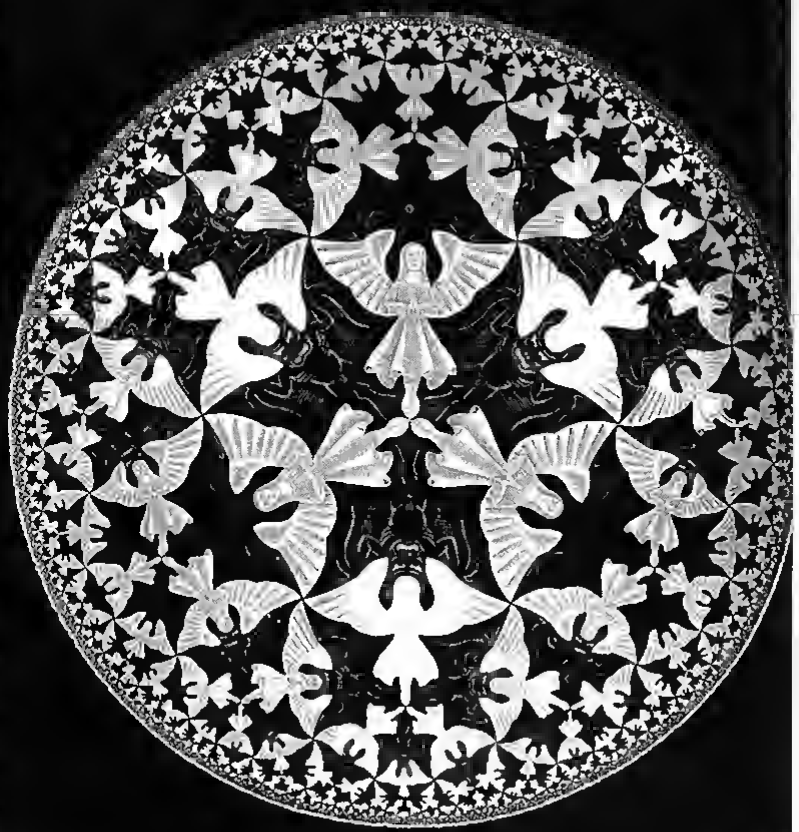


I'M DISAPPOINTED, DESHWITAT...

I BETRAY YOU...I THREATEN TO KILL YOUR BELOVED... YOUR PRE-CIOUS WHORE...
...AND THIS IS THE BEST YOU CAN DO?

I CAN'T BELIEVE SHE'S STILL STANDING! NOT EVEN A SCRATCH!
EVEN AFTER TAKING DESHWITAT'S FULL ATTACK?!
YOU ASKED HOW MILLE-NEAR BECAME A VAMPIRE?
I SHOULD BE ASKING YOU.
WHO IS SHE? I MEAN, REALLY?

Chapter 73: Revelations



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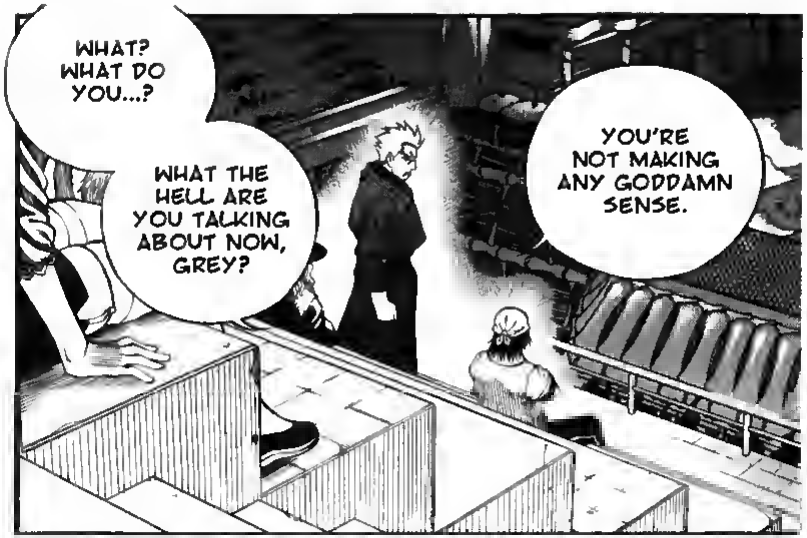
WHAT? WHAT DO YOU...?
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT NOW, GREY?
YOU'RE NOT MAKING ANY GODDAMN SENSE.

YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW, DO YOU?
HM.
LET'S WATCH THE MATCH
WHEN THIS IS OVER...I'LL TELL YOU HOW SHE BECAME A VAMPIRE
MAYBE ONCE I TELL YOU THAT...

...SOME LIGHT WILL BE SHED ON EXACTLY WHO OUR LITTLE MILLENEAR REALLY IS.
WIN OR LOSE, HER FATE IS IMPORTANT ...

...TO ALL OF US.

AND...
...TO THIS WORLD AS WELL.
IT'S ALL SO STRANGELY ANTI-CLIMACTIC, DESHWITAT.
IT'S LIKE DREAMING OF CLIMBING A MOUNTAIN. YOU PLAN FOR IT, AND IT ALL SEEMS SO DARK AND DANGEROUS AND EXCITING. AND THEN YOU FINALLY DO CLIMB IT...AND IT DOESN'T COMB ANYWHERE CLOSE TO YOUR EXPECTATIONS.
THE CLIMB WAS EASY...AND IN THE END, YOU DON'T FEEL YOU ACCOMPLISHED VERY MUCH.

WELL, NOW, LOVER...
I DON'T CARE.
NOW... I WILL KILL YOU, DESHWITAT. AND MAKE YOU MINE FOREVER.
EAT SHIT!
SOMEHOW I THOUGHT YOUR LAST WORDS WOULD BE MORE PROFOUND. EVEN IN THIS, YOU DISAPPOINT...

WHAT A MAELSTROM!
MILLENEAR AND DESHWITAT ARE HOLDING NOTHING BACK! IT'S A MEXICAN STANDOFF! WHOEVER SLIPS FIRST...IS PULP!
DESH! MILLENEAR!!
WHAT'S HAPPENING?!
NO.
MILLE-NEAR... IS WIN-NING!

아악

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으아아아아

DO
NOT
ENTER

PTOO!

THIS IS COMING RIGHT DOWN TO THE WIRE! IT'S ANYONE'S BALL GAME!
THE BALANCE EBBS AND FLOWS, BUT NEITHER COMBATANT IS GIVING ANY GROUND!
SUCH FIGHTING SPIRIT! IT'S A SHAME THERE CAN ONLY BE ONE WINNER. BUT ONLY ONE OF THESE TWO WARRIORS WILL LEAVE THE ARENA TO-NIGHT!

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, DRAISTAIL?
ARE YOU SAYING MILLENEAR IS STRONGER THAN DESH?
THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I'M SAYIN'.
WAIT JUST A DAMN MINUTE HERE...
I MEAN, ONCE DESH GOT SERIOUS, HE WENT AFTER MILLENEAR WITH EVERY-THING HE'S GOT!
THEIR POWER SEEMS TO BE EQUAL I DON'T UNDER-STAND
BOY, I COULD FILL THE GRAND CANYON WITH WHAT YOU "DON'T UNNER-STAND."
YOU'RE LOOKING AT IT THROUGH PURELY HUMAN PERSPECTIVE.
AS YOU SAID, IF YOU CON-SIDER PURE POWER, DESH-WITAT'S DOIN' BETTER.

AND IT'S TRUE THAT HE WENT ALL OUT ONCE HE DECIDED THERE WAS NO CHOICE BUT TO FIGHT.
HE'S A COLD BASTARD. I COMMEND HIM FER THAT.
IRONY IS, IT'S THAT DETER-MINATION THAT'S GONNA DO HIM IN.
NO CHOICE BUT TO KILL A FORMER COMRADE, AND ONE O' THE FEW PEOPLE IN THIS LIFE THAT EVER GAVE TWO SHITS ABOUT HIM.
HE'S OVEREXERTING HIMSELF TRY-ING TO MAKE IT QUICK.
HE'S PUSHING HARDER AND HARDER, AND NOT BEING AS CAUTIOUS AS HE SHOULD.
IF HE HAS TO KILL HER, HE'LL AT LEAST TRY TA MAKE IT QUICK.
...AS FAST AS POS-SIBLE
HE'LL TRY TA DO IT IN ONE BLOW...
AS PAINLESS AS HE CAN MAKE IT.
DON'T THINK MILLENEAR HASN'T NOTICED. SHE'S TAKIN' ADVANTAGE O' THAT FACT.
SHE SHOWS A LITTLE WEAKNESS, AND LURES HIM IN... AND HE'LL DROP HIS GUARD, AND THEN SHE'LL STRIKE.

IF HE DOESN'T WISE UP SOON...
...IT'LL BE DESH THAT DOESN'T WALK AWAY FROM THIS.
SINCE YOU BROUGHT THIS UP, LET ME SAY SOME-THING...
DESHWITAT'S ABILITIES... THAT "DEMON'S BAPTISM," OR WHATEVER IT IS THAT HE DOES ...
IT'S NOT SOMETHING HE CAN USE FOR THIS LONG, IS IT?
HOW'D HE KNOW THAT?
HE'S HITTING THE WALL, ISN'T HE?
HOW MUCH LONGER CAN HE KEEP THIS UP? TEN MINUTES?
FIVE?
WHY DON'T YOU KISS MY--
THAT DAMNED FOOL!
EXPENDING ALL THAT POWER, AND IT WON'T EVEN TOUCH HER!
HRAAAH!!

Chapter 74: Conclusion

HUFF
HUFF
THAT SHOULD... WAIT!
SOMETHING ...
SOMETHING'S WRONG!
HUFF
HUFF

I UNDER-STAND NOW ...
I ACCEPTED THAT I HAVE TO KILL MILLENEAR ...
...AND THOUGHT I'D SHOW HER MERCY ...
A QUICK DEATH. PAINLESS.
JUST AS SHE KNEW I WOULD.
JUST AS SHE PLANNED.

I'VE HURRIED THE MATCH... EXPENDED TOO MUCH, TOO RECKLESSLY ...
SHE PLAYED ME FOR A FOOL... AND NOW THAT I'VE GIVEN HER AN OPENING...

DESH!
SLOW LEARNER, THAT BOY... BUT I WAGER HE KNOWS HE SCREWED THE POOCH NOW.
THAT'S RIGHT!
HE KNOWS WHAT HE DID WRONG...HE CAN...
NO, RETT.

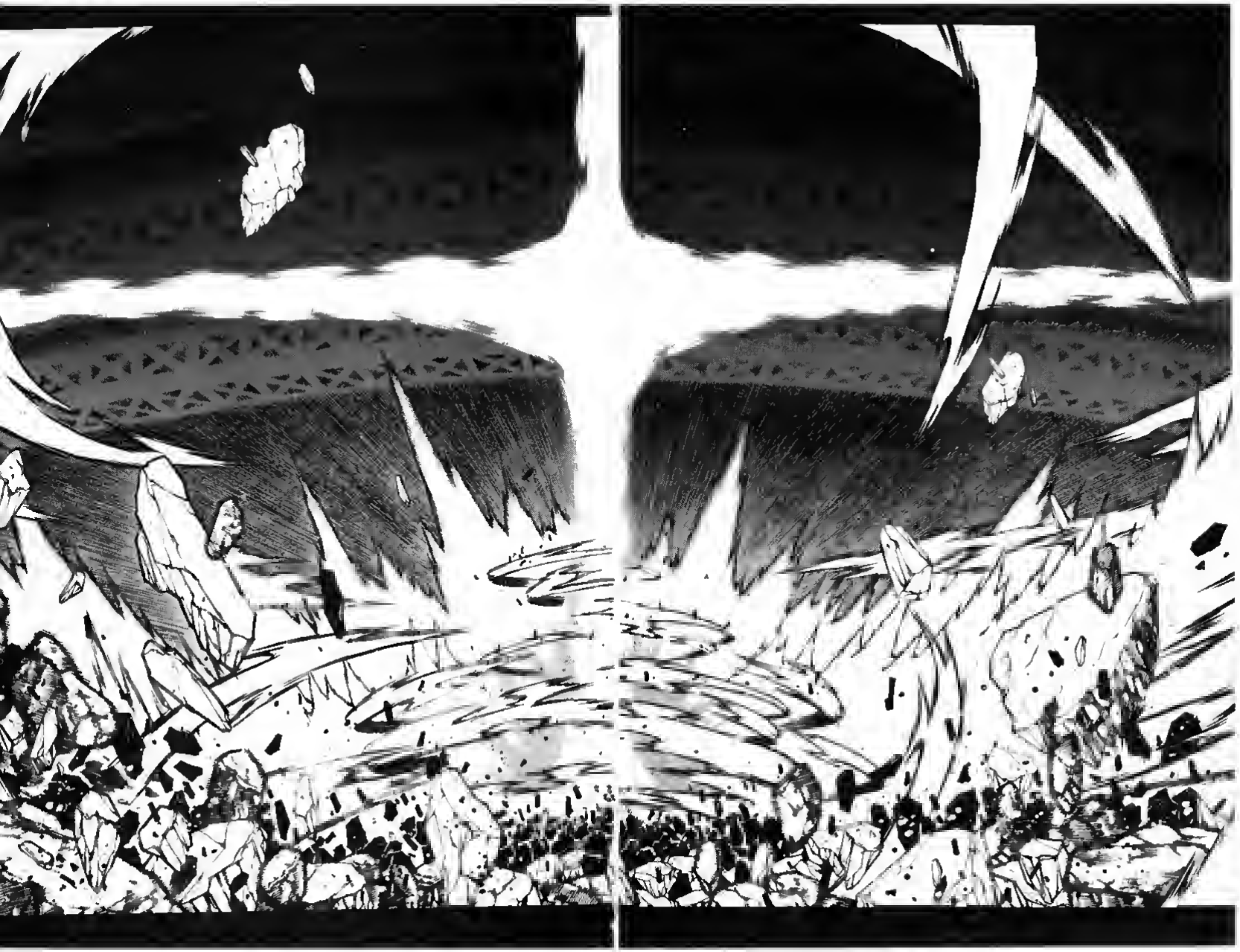
IT'S TOO LATE.

WHAT A BLOW!
KILL HIM!
KILL!
THAT STRIKE NEARLY TOOK DESHWITAT'S HEAD OFF! HE'S REELING... THIS COULD BE THE END!

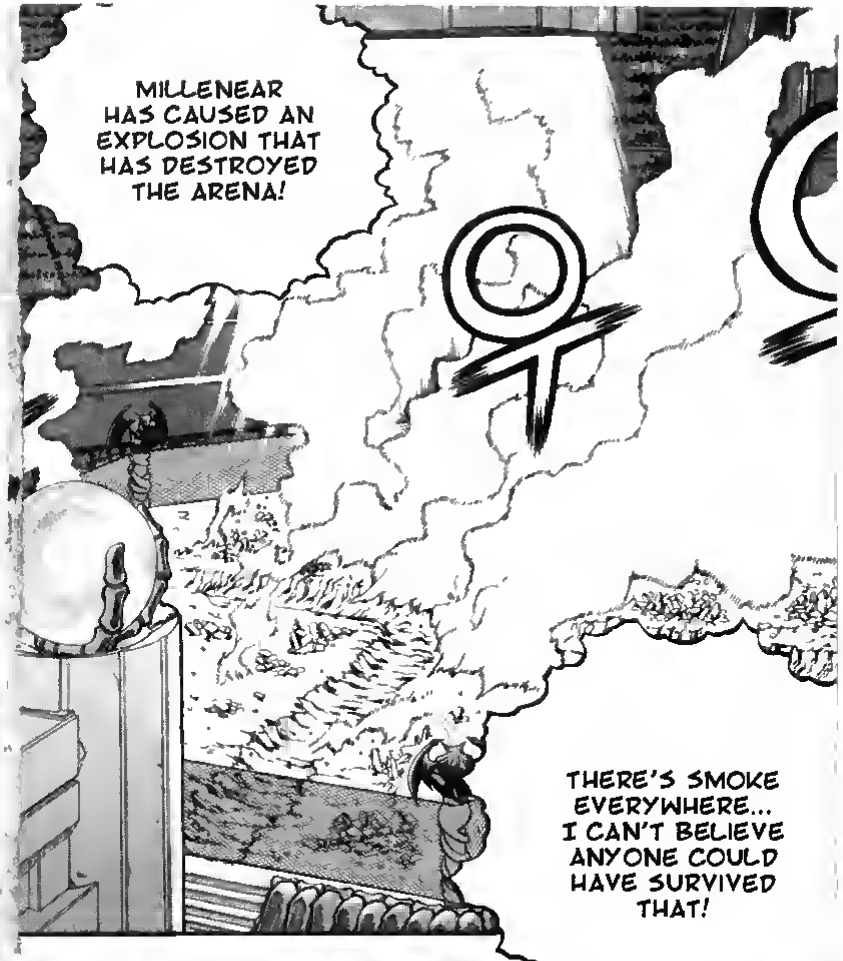
AGH... DAMN ...

HOW I'VE HUNGERED FOR THIS MO-MENT...AND I THINK IT'S ONLY FITTING THAT I PIERCE YOUR HEART THE WAY YOU PIERCED MINE.
IT'S ALSO FITTING, I THINK, THAT THE POWER OF LIGHT THAT STARTED OUR JOURNEY SHOULD END IT AS WELL.
POWER OF LIGHT? YOU...THINK IT'S SAFE...USING THAT HERE?

DIDN'T I MAKE IT CLEAR, LOVER?
NEITHER ONE OF US IS WALKING AWAY FROM THIS...
DRAISTAIL... WHAT'S SHE...?!
IT'S SUICIDE!
STOP, MILLENEAR! THIS WASN'T PART OF THE--
GOODBYE, DESHWITAT... IF I CAN'T HAVE YOU IN THIS LIFE, I'LL HAVE YOU IN THE NEXT!



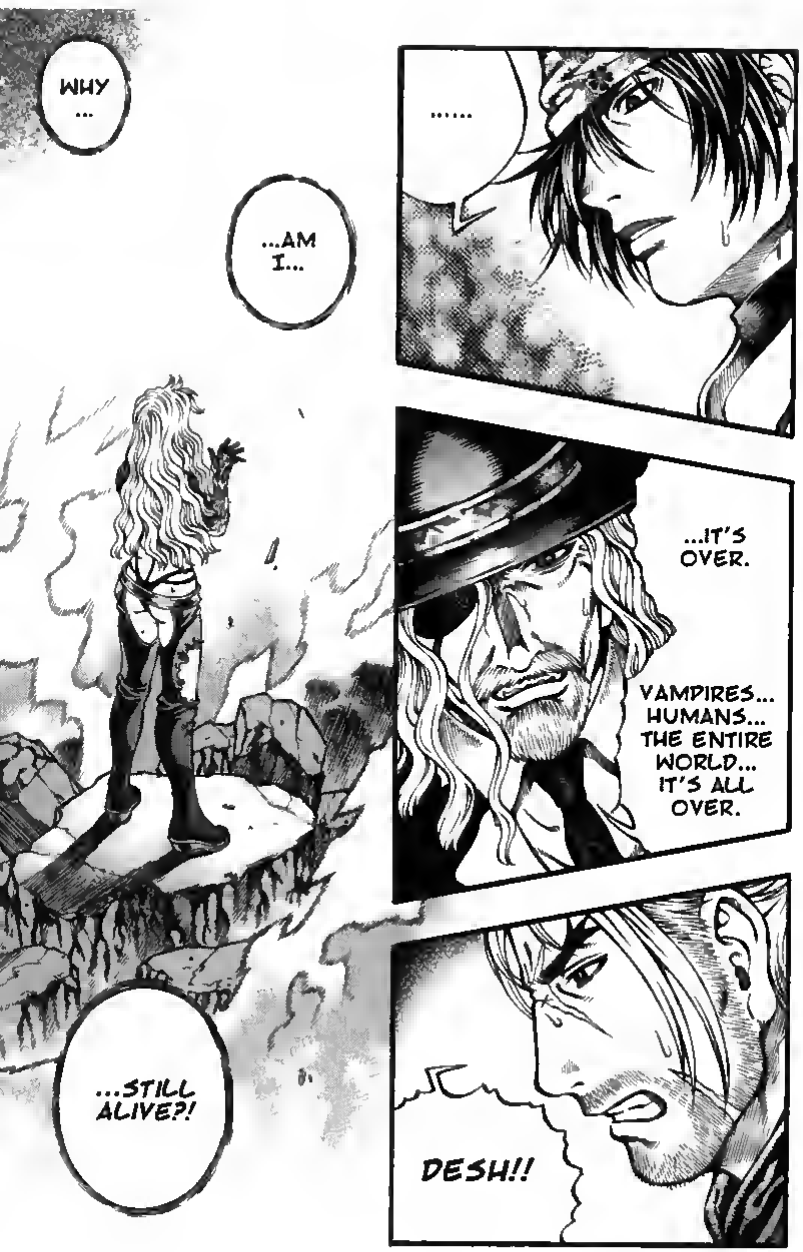
THIS...IS UNBELIEV-ABLE...


MILLENEAR HAS CAUSED AN EXPLOSION THAT HAS DESTROYED THE ARENA!
THERE'S SMOKE EVERYWHERE... I CAN'T BELIEVE ANYONE COULD HAVE SURVIVED THAT!

ARE...ARE THEY BOTH DEAD?!

DESH...
NO...
...IT CAN'T BE!!
.....
SOME-THING'S MOVING!
OH...
SOMEONE IS ALIVE DOWN THERE!
THE SEMI-FINALS ARE OVER! THE ONLY QUESTION REMAINING... WHO IS LEFT STANDING?!
IS IT DESHWITAT RUDRICH?! IS IT MILLENEAR SHEPHILD?! WHO WILL FACE GREY IN THE FINALS?!

IT'S MILLENEAR SHEPHILD!!
THE WINNER IS MILLENEAR SHEPHILD!!
WHAT... HOW DID THIS...


WHY ...
...AM I...
.....
...IT'S OVER.
VAMPIRES... HUMANS... THE ENTIRE WORLD... IT'S ALL OVER.
...STILL ALIVE?!
DESH!!

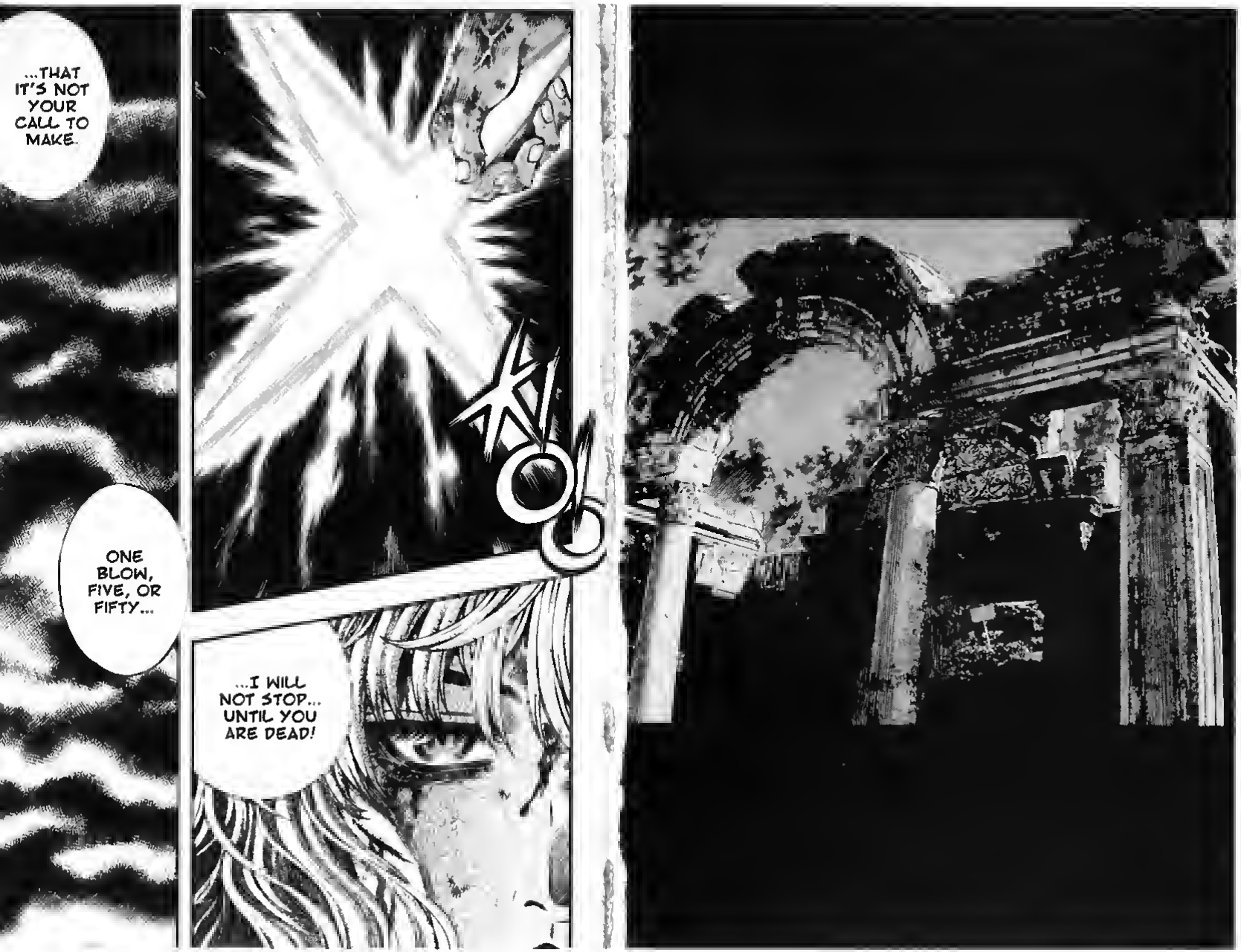
IT'S TOO EARLY ...
...TO JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS.
BERYUN ...?!
QUIET YOUR MINDS. FEEL THE FLOW OF ENERGY ...
ALTHOUGH IT FLICKERS ...
...AND MAY YET DIE...

...THE FIRE IS STILL ALIVE!
HURG
HUFF
HURG

UNBELIEV-ABLE! DESHWITAT IS STILL ALIVE!
THE MATCH CONTINUES! THE MATCH CONTINUES!
I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT! BROKEN, BLOODIED, DESHWITAT REFUSES TO GO DOWN!
NO MATTER WHO WINS, WE HAVE BEEN WITNESS TO THE GREATEST BATTLE EVER HELD IN THE HISTORY OF THE V.L.T.!!

WHAT DOES DESHWITAT HAVE LEFT? HE LOOKS DEAD ON HIS FEET!

I...I CAN'T ...
I TOLD YOU, MILLE-NEAR ...
...DIE YET!
I'M AFRAID, LOVER ...


...THAT IT'S NOT YOUR CALL TO MAKE.
ONE BLOW, FIVE, OR FIFTY...
...I WILL NOT STOP... UNTIL YOU ARE DEAD!

HOW STUBBORN YOU ARE!
WHY CAN'T YOU JUST BE A GOOD BOY...AND DIE?
HOW MUCH MORE PAIN CAN YOU STAND? DON'T YOU WANT TO STOP FIGHTING...TO FINALLY REST? WOULD ETERNITY WITH ME REALLY BE SO TERRIBLE?
DON'T YOU DARE LAUGH AT ME!!

NO. IT WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN SO TERRIBLE.
ANOTHER TIME, ANOTHER PLACE, MILLENEAR ...
...I COULD HAVE LOVED YOU.
I FAILED YOU, MILLENEAR. FAILED TO PROTECT YOU...
.....!!!
...JUST LIKE LILITH.
YOU KNOW, MILLENEAR, THAT EVEN IF WE BOTH DIE HERE TOGETHER, I CAN NEVER BE YOURS.

I SHOULD HAVE SEEN THIS BEFORE.
IF YOU TRULY LOVE ME...GIVE ME MORE TIME. PLEASE.
I KNOW YOU WERE TELLING ME THE TRUTH BEFORE. I KNOW LILITH IS STILL ALIVE.
BUT SOMEHOW... I CAN'T HELP BUT THINK SHE'S NO LONGER THE LILITH I KNEW.
STILL, I CAN'T ABANDON HER TO KAL...ANY MORE THAN I COULD ABANDON YOU.
UNTIL HER SPIRIT CAN BE FREED...I CANNOT GO FORWARD.
THE ANSWER IS SO OBVIOUS NOW.

I...I CAN'T PROMISE ANYTHING ...
OH...OH, DESH...
ALL TOO EASY.
...BUT AFTER SHE IS FREE... PERHAPS I'LL BE ABLE TO RECEIVE ANOTHER'S HEART.
FORGIVE ME, MILLENEAR.

10K

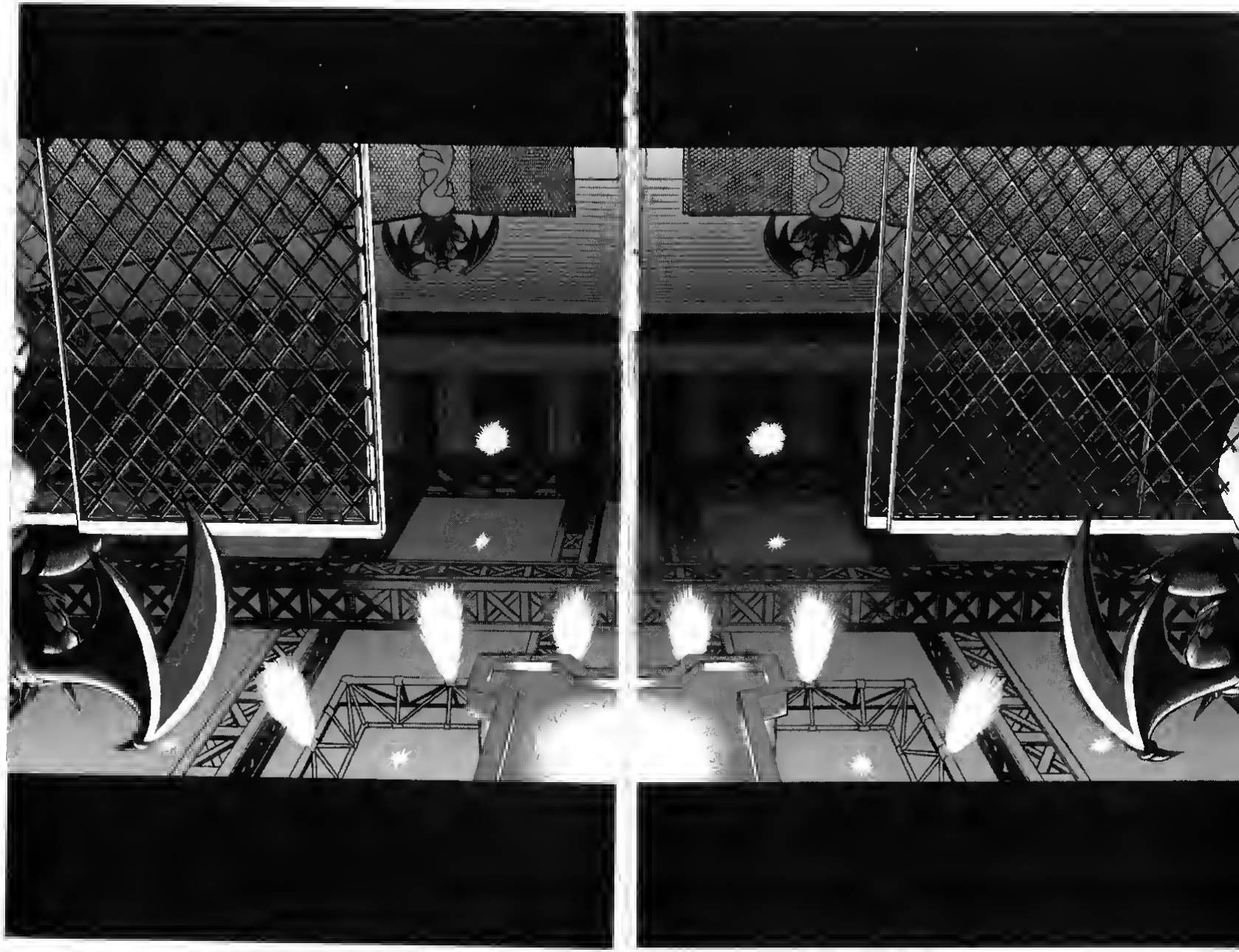
.....
HURG
DE... DESH...
...WI... TAT!!!

DON'T SPEAK. I HAVE TO BURN YOU BEFORE YOU BREATHE YOUR LAST.
FOR A TIME, MIL...
...YOU'LL BE AT PEACE. WAIT FOR ME AS THE SAND OF DEATH.
I SWEAR I'LL FIND A WAY TO MAKE YOU HUMAN AGAIN.

IT... IT'S...
THIS IS INCREDIBLE! DESHWITAT HAS TURNED THE TIDE AND COME BACK FROM CERTAIN DEFEAT TO WIN THE SEMI-FINALS!
YOU ROCK, DESHWI-TAT!
YEAH! I WAS CHEERING FOR YOU FROM THE BEGINNING!
DESHWITAT ADVANCES... TO FACE GREY FOR THE TITLE OF VAMPIRE LORD!!
SHUT UP... ALL OF YOU ...
GREY...

Preview: Vol. 19

As Deshwitat struggles with his conscience in the aftermath of his battle with Millenear, Grey reveals the truth of how she became a vampire to a stunned Rett. And in the bowels of the terrifying Tower of Trials, Remi and Eiji battle creatures more horrifying than anything from their worst nightmares— all in a last ditch effort to rescue the elite covert exorcism team known as... The Order of St. Michael!



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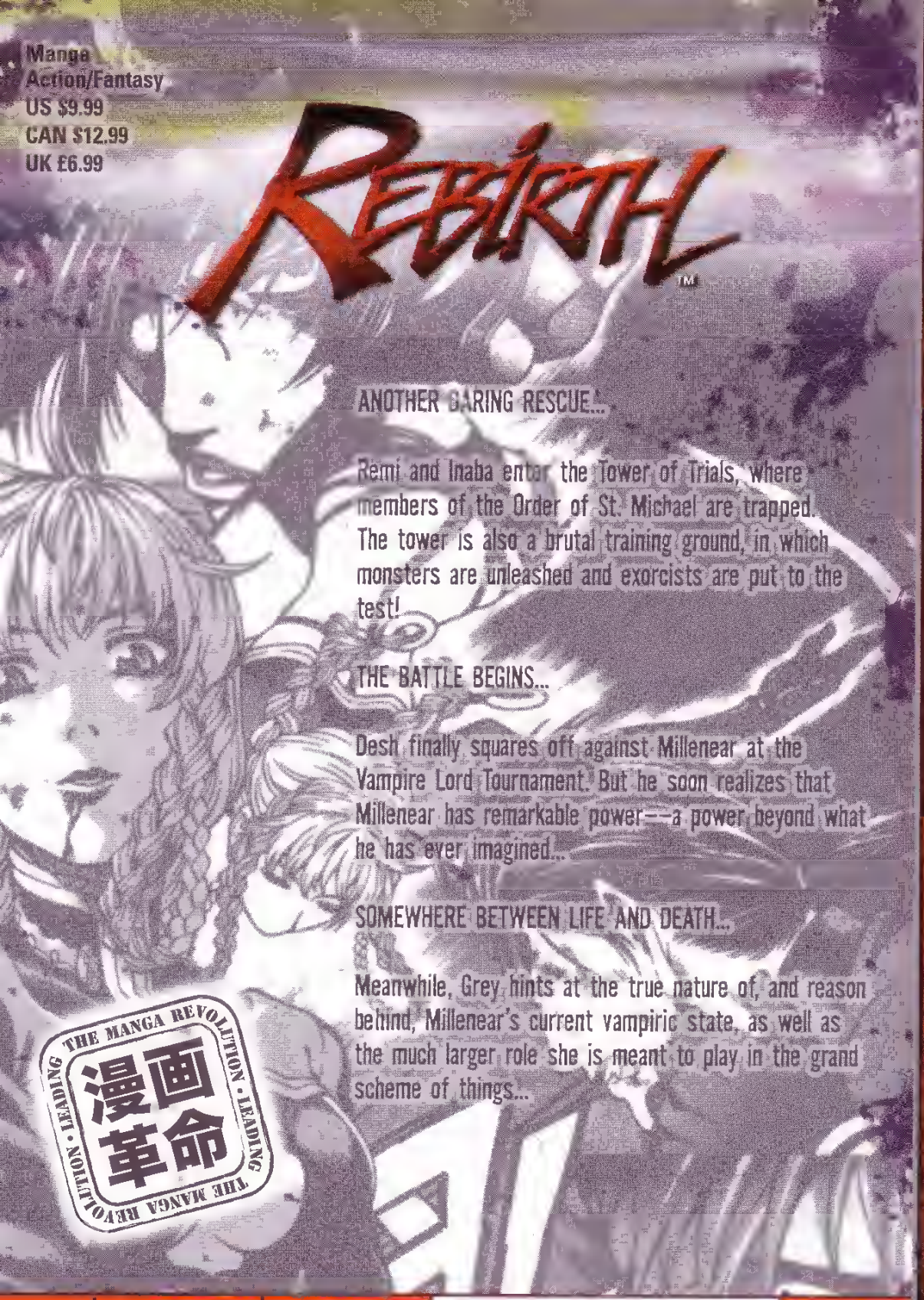

ANOTHER DARING RESCUE...

Remi and Inaba enter the Tower of Trials, where members of the Order of St. Michael are trapped. The tower is also a brutal training ground, in which monsters are unleashed and exorcists are put to the test!

THE BATTLE BEGINS...

Desh finally squares off against Millenear at the Vampire Lord Tournament. But he soon realizes that Millenear has remarkable power—a power beyond what he has ever imagined...

SOMEWHERE BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH...

Meanwhile, Grey hints at the true nature of, and reason behind, Millenear's current vampiric state, as well as the much larger role she is meant to play in the grand scheme of things...

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